(b) if so, the details of the project indicating the areas so identified for exploration to begin with; and

(c) the rough estimates of gas that could be available off the Orissa coast?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) and (b) GAIL has participating interests in Production Sharing Contracts (PSCs) in 3 exploration blocks off the Orissa Coast. The details of the blocks of the offshore are as under:

Block Name	Consortium	Operator
NEC-OSN-97/1	OAO Gazprom 50% GAIL 50%	Gazprom
MN-OSN-97/3	ONGC-85% GAIL-15%	ONGC
MN-OSN-2002/2	ONGC-40% IOC-20% GAIL-20% OIL-20%	ONGC

Exploration work is in progress in all the above blocks.

(c) Exploration work in offshore Mahanadi Basin so far has resulted in four gas discoveries by M/s. Reliance Industries Limited. The initial in place reserves of three discoveries are estimated to be about 27.2 BCM while reserves of the 4th discovery are under estimation.

Profit earned by oil refining companies

1266. SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the profits earned by oil refining companies and the oil exploration companies during the period when the retail prices were allegedly not adjusted in line with international prices;

(b) whether oil refining companies which do not market so-called subsidized products made a windfall profit during the last one year; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) to (c) Details of profits earned by Public Sector Oil Companies during the year 2003-04 and during the period April-September, 2004 are given in the Statement attached. (See below)

Owing to higher international prices of crude oil and petroleum products, upstream companies like ONGC and OIL, as well as the stand-alone Refineries, have shown improved profits during the period April-September, 2004 compared to the corresponding period last year, as detailed in the Statement attached. However, integrated marketing companies have shown a decline in profit in the same period owing to the domestic retail prices of petroleum products not matching higher international prices, thus resulting in under-recoveries.

Statement

Details of profit after tax of oil PSUs

(Figures Rs. in crore)

Serial No.	Name of the Company	2003-2004			2004-05
		April-September	October-March	Total	April-September
1	2	3	4	5	6
	UPSTREAM OIL COMPANIES				
1.	Oil & Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC).	4,959.54 Ltd.	3704.86	8664.40	5,692.07
2.	GAIL (India) Ltd. (GAIL)	852.21	1017.13	1869.34	795.09
3.	Oil India Ltd. (OIL)	355.47 OIL	594.23	949.70	442.08
	MARKETING COMPANIES				
4.	Indian Oil Corporation Ltd. (IOC)	2,751.44	4253.38	7004.82	2.711.70
5.	Hindustan Petroleum Corporation (HPCL)	601.18 Ltd.	1302.76	1903.94	541.61
6.	Bharat Petroleum Corporation (BPCL)	796.39 Ltd.	898.18	1694.57	468.68
7.	IBP Co. Ltd. (IBP)	81.87	132.79	214.66	-69.54
	STAND-ALONE REFINERIES				
8.	Kochi Refineries Ltd. (KRL)	235.00	320.09	555.09	328.60
9.	Chennai Petroleum Corporation (CPCL)	74.34 Ltd.	325.71	400.05	291.11

1	2	3	4	5	6
10.	Bongaigaon Refinery &	190.95	112.79	3003.74	293.13
11.	Petrochemicals Ltd. (BRPL) Numaligarh		139.42	214.95	198.48
12.	Refinery Ltd. (NRL)	75.53 Mangalore	590.78	459.41	280.47
	Refinery and	-131.37 Petrochemicals			
	Ltd. (MRPL)				
	TOTAL:	10,842.55	13392.12	24234.67	11,973.48

GAIL'S joint venture

1267. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether GAIL has signed a joint venture deal with a Russian Firm Gas Prone;

(b) if so, the details of this deal;

(c) what are the advantages to GAIL from this deal; and

(d) the details contribution of the Russian firm?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. GAIL (India) Limited and Gazprom, Russia have signed a Strategic Cooperation Agreement (SCA) on 3rd December, 2004. As per the SCA, GAIL would jointly examine various project opportunities in India, Russia and third world countries such as joint participation in the forthcoming NELP-V round, gas pipeline projects, underground gas storage, gas distribution networks, gas processing; gas based petrochemicals, expansion of CNG use, etc.

(c) and (d) Gazprom is one of the largest gas companies in the world with rich experience in exploration, pipelines (including deep sea pipelines), gas processing, underground storage, gas hydrates, etc. Gazprom and GAIL are partners in Block 26 in the Bay of Bengal, awarded under NELP-I. The SCA will, it is hoped, benefit GAIL with Gazprom participation in the NELP-V round. It will also benefit GAIL in pursuing GAIL's globalization initiatives in countries such as Russia and the Central Asian Republics where Gazprom has a significant presence. As Gazprom has considerable experience in the entire gas value chain, this could be shared with GAIL through joint implementation of agreed projects.